

CHIASMUS AND PROSIFICATION OF THE *CANTAR DE MIO CID* IN THE
CRÓNICA DE VEINTE REYES

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This article addresses a phenomenon of prosification concerning the Spanish Medieval epic poem, the *Cantar de mio Cid* (CMC) in the Alphonsine history, the *Crónica de veinte reyes* (CVR).¹ As chroniclers took what they knew of the epic poem and converted it into readable Castilian prose, they inverted word order in certain portions of the text in what appear to be a deliberate criss-crossing of proper nouns, clitics, subjects, and verbs. This word order inversion during the prosification process sheds important light on the role of those in the court of Alfonso X in Toledo in the fourteenth century who were responsible for compiling vast amounts of information from disparate sources. In addition, understanding this process helps modern readers to comprehend the liminal space between oral and literate cultures. Whether this phenomenon of switching word order happens in the prosification of other texts has yet to be determined. For now, this in-depth analysis of chiastic prosification of the CMC in the CVR will serve as a model for such studies.

Critical Apparatus

The approach used to explain the process first examines prosification as a method of copying text. I have researched carefully the figure of chiasmus as a device and analyzed its usage over the centuries. Chiasmus is most commonly referred to in passing as a simple poetic figure involving a few words in the same text or, in some cases of ancient literature, it is a figure that spins entire webs of a story in symmetrical, overarching patterns. After plumbing the depths of the chiasmus chasm, I comment on what I have observed in the prosification of the CMC. The examples of chiastic prosification in the CVR help us to draw conclusions about the nature of copying and the importance of the original source text.

In researching this phenomenon, I placed the text of the CVR (MS Escorial I.i.12) alongside the CMC (Montaner 2007 edition) to match up points of convergence between the two texts. I also drew upon the work of scholars who had already researched the two documents extensively, and in particular the numerous manuscripts of the CVR. The breadth of knowledge brought to bear on this subject is due in large part to the work of Nancy Joe Dyer, whose meticulous study of the inclusion of the CMC in the CVR paved the way for my discovery of word order inversion between the two texts. As examples of chiasmic prosification came to light, I isolated them and catalogued them, following the order in which they appeared in the CVR. The entire corpus of examples was used to study the patterns of intertextual inversion that could be considered chiasmic prosification. The final portion of this article focuses on a cluster of examples that best illustrate the phenomenon. Finally, I describe the patterns that came to light, including parts of speech involved, recurring themes, clusters of convergence and the role of the scribe or chronicler² in the prosification process.

Prosification

Prosification is the process by which poetic text, or verse, is rendered as prose narrative. Marina Brownlee (1985), in tracing the history of the practice of prosification, comments that prose was held to be "more truthful than verse" and therefore was reserved particularly for translations and chronicles in the early Middle Ages (400). It is no wonder that the story of Rodrigo Díaz would find greater credibility by having his story told in a chronicle rather than circulating about in oral accounts of his life. Yet, linguistically, there are many things to be learned from prosifications. As the verse form is laid aside and the essence of an account remains, it is particularly illustrative to find that formulas and epithets no longer play the roles with regard to maintaining meter and syllable counts that they did in verse. While prose, and especially that of the chronicles, did have stock phrases in transitional contexts and some repetitive passages, the dependency on meter for their consistency gave them a substantially weaker hold on the syntax. Prose can still retain traces of the assonance present in the original poem, as many scholars have observed with examples of prosified text, but this residual merely shows that the chroniclers' efforts to prosify did not eliminate all traces of the verse. What we are

to examine in the CVR is the role the scribe played in the prosification process and whether that scribe engaged in alteration of the original text that was in any way intentional, artistic, or manipulative.³

Chiasmus

The phenomenon of inverting word order has more weight than that of employing a simple rhetorical device. In chiasmus, authors make a deliberate attempt to repeat a concept by switching the order of terms and phrases. If one were to assign the letters A and B to elements in a phrase or sentence, the symmetry of the inversion would follow an AB:B'A'-type patterning. The term "chiasmus" comes from the word for the Greek letter χ 'chi,' in large part because of the shape of the letter. The word "chiastic", when describing a pattern, literally means "a structure that forms a χ ." In literature and speech, this rhetorical/poetic device has been used for centuries to draw a parallel between two or more concepts or to contrast opposing ideas.

While one can read much on chiasmus and the presence of the structure in antiquity, little has been written on the structure itself and its importance in literature. Chiastic phrases and sayings tend to appeal to both users and hearers. For example, the famous quotations "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country" from John F. Kennedy⁴ and "When the going gets tough, the tough get going" attributed to Joseph P. Kennedy (Grothe 9) use almost identical words on each side of the phrase to construct a rhetorical chiasmus. Chiastic structure also serves as the basis for many popular sayings and clichés, such as the one in Spanish, "el que mucho habla de lo que sabe, poco sabe de lo que dice" or an even more famous quote from Antonio Machado "se hace camino al andar, al andar se hace camino." In the former case, the inversion is not word for word as in the latter, but the concepts are inverted evenly.

In order for chiasmus to work properly, the parameters under which it operates need to be clearly understood. First, a common theme usually defines the context. This context could be a verse, a phrase, a sentence, a paragraph, or even an entire story. With chiasmus, the necessary traits are that the structure be repeated backwards. Often there is a central focal point around which the chiastic structure revolves. This is the 'crux' of the argument. Some studies have shown how a chiastic construction can draw attention to the center of the inversion to convey a certain message (Welch 1995). Chiasmus is not

capricious, but rather it is often used as a tool to bring attention to a given issue. In all cases, chiasmus repeats a common theme through some form of parallelism and operates under defined parameters following centuries of traditions and historic patterns.

Examples of chiasmus date back to Sumeric, Aramaic, Hebrew, Latin, and Greek literature. Most catalogues of literary terms define chiasmus (also referred to as *chiasm*) as a tool used at the level of the phrase or sentence. However, there are studies that describe passages that go beyond the sentence to more extended uses of the technique at the level of the paragraph or even larger portions of text. Shipley, in a dictionary of literary terms, defines chiasm (sic) as “a balanced passage” (42). John Welch, the author of several articles on chiasmus, has identified examples of it at the level of chapters and entire story patterns. In a book on chiasmus in ancient literature, Welch brought together hundreds of examples of this poetic figure from essays written by specialists in their respective literatures. Welch states at the beginning of the book, “When love of symmetry becomes so extraordinarily pronounced, I think we are justified in giving it a name, and looking for a cause” (Welch 1981:13). Richard Lanham in his book on rhetorical figures states that it was used in antiquity to elaborate on a theme or argument (33). Kennedy, *et al* explain further by calling chiasmus a “syntactical pattern . . . [that] in more sophisticated contexts . . . can be a conclusive-sounding rhetorical device signaling important reversals” (22).

But chiasmus is more than simply figurative language. Like other favorite poetic devices and figures such as alliteration, metaphor, metonymy, simile, synecdoche, hyperbole, zeugma, litotes, and apostrophe, chiasmus takes poetics to a higher level of expression. The very nature of poetry demands the use of extralinguistic techniques to convey a given message. As with nature and the cosmos, where examples of symmetry abound, poetry becomes an adornment to nature rather than these traits being an adornment of poetry. There are three principle characteristics of chiasmus: repetition, symmetry and centralization. Drawing from the history and tradition, let us take a brief look at said characteristics before examining how they are manifest in the Alphonsine school of prosification.

Repetition

Repetition is so important in teaching that it is more of a practice than a method. It serves to seal in the mind of the learner the message being communicated. What is not understood the first time around tends to receive attention the second or third time. Repetition cuts a neural groove into the learner's mind that can be drawn upon for application to other acquired knowledge. Often repetition is not word for word; rather it is slightly rephrased or represented in a way that allows for multiple conduits to the core principle.

Repetition is a key factor in patterning. For example, music employs it as a way to communicate common sentiments and to stimulate the emotion of the listeners and/or musicians. From Chopsticks to Gregorian chants, repetition can be both parallel and chiasmic in the ascent and descent of notes and musical patterns. Baroque music in particular takes advantage of chiasmic style by repeating the same phrase backwards and sometimes in different clefs, registers or even instruments, all in harmony with the original.

Repetition serves an important role with memory as well. Medieval poetry found itself at the juncture between antiquity and modernity, between the oral tradition and the written or literate tradition; the repetitive aspect of chiasmus reinforced concepts that if mentioned only once would have disappeared from memory. Oral memory, as Parry (1928), Lord (1964) and others discovered, is not necessarily word for word. What is important in cultures whose primary form of expression is oral is the repetition of an idea. Walter Ong's assertion (1982) that oral expression has four characteristics (i.e. additive, aggregative, redundant, and conservative or traditionalist) strengthens the argument for the use of chiasmus in medieval Spanish poetry, since in Spain the verse of the early Middle Ages arose from oral traditions. The figure of chiasmus was more than just a repetition of concepts and words; it served as an important pedagogical and mnemonic tool.

Symmetry

Unlike the mere repetition of elements, chiasmus functions in equilibrium; this is the reason why AB:B'A'-type references are used. The pattern is not AB:A', nor is it ABC:A'. There are examples in literature of ring structures with a more ABC:B'A'-type patterning, but

chiasmus differentiates itself by posing a symmetrical repetition of *all* original elements.⁵ With chiasmus, the same number of elements pertaining to the first part need to be reflected in the second part in descending order. Welch cites examples from antiquity in which some of the elements are not necessarily repeated in the same order, but the overall scheme achieves a kind of balance. In this respect, it is not abnormal to see a chiasmus along the order of ABCD:D'B'C'A' as well as ABCD: D'C'B'A'. The overall symmetry of chiasmus satisfies the requirement of repetition but does not appear unstructured or incomplete.

Centralization

Repeating a message underscores the importance of the message itself. One thought, repeated twice in an extended chiasmus where multiple elements come into play, focuses the attention on a central element. In most chiasmic structures, the central theme organizes the entire text. According to David Noel Freedman, chiasmus "serves to concentrate the reader's or hearer's interest on the central expression" (7).

Modern rhetoric stresses the importance of emphasizing the most important points at the beginning of a speech, lecture or essay. And there are still schools of thought that teach that it is better to keep the readers or hearers in the dark, leaving them to guess up until the end before the most important point of the argument is presented. But according to studies on chiasmus, poets who have chosen to employ this technique place their central message in the middle. Not only do authors tend to take this approach, but those accustomed to reading chiasmic structures in antiquity learned to look for the message at the mid-point of an extended chiasmus (Welch 11).

With regard to the kind of intertextual chiasmus found between the CMC and the CVR, the central element is the poet. There are several examples in the Middle Ages of a passage in one text quoting another author. Normally an author would quote the original word for word because the passage may be a familiar refrain or expression, as in, "Los suspiros son aire y van al aire."⁶ Nevertheless, some pre-literate cultures quote poets or authors in a less precise manner. Lord confirmed this when he asked certain poets if they thought they were quoting "exactly" what another had said. Although they insisted that they were, it was found that the same concept was communicated, but

not necessarily with the same words or in the same order (Lord 1964:125). In an oral culture, this is fertile ground for chiasmus. The function this practice takes on is one of calling the attention of the reader or hearer to the center of the inversion, which in this case would be the poet from which the source material originated. The foundation now having been laid for perceiving how chiasmus works most effectively, we will explore the texts wherein this device is used in prosification.

Prosification of the *Cantar de Mio Cid* in the *Crónica de veinte reyes*

The most faithful prosification of the story of the Cid is found in the *Crónica de veinte reyes* (CVR). He is also the central character in many medieval and renaissance romances but the principle account of his deeds remains the *Cantar de mio Cid*, which is the only intact epic poem of medieval Spain. The CVR is a lesser-known, less comprehensive historical work that was produced at the court of Alfonso X in Toledo in the thirteenth and fourteenth century (González-Casanovas 1990). It is not only the most faithful prosification, it also contains the most detailed account of the Cid's life of all the chronicles up to that point. The remarkable trait of this poem relevant to our discussion here is just how closely this historical prose work parallels the epic poem, the *Cantar de Mio Cid* (CMC). It has been treated by a handful of scholars over the years, among whom Ramón Menéndez Pidal figures most prominently, but it is Dyer who explains best the exact nature of the relationship between the CVR and the CMC in 'El Mio Cid' del taller alfonsi: versión en prosa en la 'Primera Crónica General' y en la 'Crónica de veinte reyes'. Others who have also contributed to our understanding of the relationship between the content of the two texts are Brian Powell in *Epic and Chronicle: The 'Cantar de mio Cid' and the 'Crónica de veinte reyes'* and D.G. Pattison in *From Legend to Chronicle: The Treatment of Epic Material in Alphonsine Historiography*.⁷ Matthew Bailey states in a review of Dyer's work that "the editor has provided a tool of immeasurable utility in future critical commentary on the methodology of the anonymous authors of these prose renditions, their common sources and the reconstruction of the poem" (314). In another review of Dyer's work, Joseph Ricapito claims that "it will remain the definitive work on the prosification of *Mio Cid* for many years to come. All medievalists owe Dyer a debt of gratitude" (494). It is under this

premise that the present study has undertaken to examine the chiasmic points of intersection between the texts.

In doing this research, it became clear that chiasmic prosification did not occur to the same extent between the CMC and all of the manuscripts of the CVR. The manuscript that stood out in this regard was the Escorial Y.i.12 manuscript, which was originally included in the ADMYTE program produced by the Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies. Dyer refers to this as manuscript N (1995:19). She mentions further certain variations in MS. N that are not found in MS. J—the focal point of the majority of her analysis in her dissertation (31). Dyer also mentions the fact that MS. N' is a copy of MS. N, however as to whether MS. N' exhibits the same prosifying characteristics as MS. N has yet to be determined.

Chiasmic Prosifying

Chiasmus is at work in the CMC all by itself as a poetic figure. Examples are lines 2402-03:

Los de mio Çid a los de Búcar *de las tiendas los sacan,*
sácanlos de las tiendas, cáenlos en alcaz.

Seen in a more descriptive visualization, the inversion appears clearly:

1. A de las tiendas
- B los
- C sacan
- C' sacan
- B' los
- A' de las tiendas (CMC 2402-03)⁸

It can only be speculated that the purpose of such figures within the poem was to employ a rhetorical technique. While numerous additional examples of such rhetorical chiasmus abound, the focus of this article is only on the type of chiasmus that took place in the prosification process as the CMC was incorporated into the CVR, noting words and phrases that were inverted for no apparent reason.

Before examining these examples of chiasmic prosification, however, we need to look at the examples of parallelism between the two texts. It is surprising to note how well MS. N of the CVR matches up against the only surviving copy of the CMC; in fact, the similarity

between the two is striking. Due to the paucity of historical evidence of one text directly copying another in earlier Spanish literature, one should not take for granted the picture of scribal practice this affords. It is acceptable that there would be multiple manuscripts of the same text and even more so that there would be a great deal of variance between them, but upon learning of the existence of an epic account in a chronicle, pessimism sets in concerning the commonalities that might exist. When such parallelism appears between texts belonging not only to what we believe to be different centuries but also to different genres, the match is fascinating. Take for example, the following quote from the third Cantar of the CMC where the poetic text follows along underneath the prose text:

2. El Rey don alfonso levantose estonçes &
Essora se levó en pie el buen rey don Alfonso

dixo yo desde que fuy Rey nunca fiz mas de dos cortes
. . . Yo, de que fu rey, non fiz más de dos cortes

la una en burgos la otra en carrion &
la una fue en Burgos e la otra en Carrión,

esta es la terçera que agora fago aquj en toledo
esta terçera a Toledo la vin fer oy

por amor del çid que le fagan
por el amor de mio Çid

derecho los jnfantes de carrion del a querella que dellos ha.
(CVR 159v)
que reçiba derecho de ifantes de Carrión.(CMC 3127-33)

This passage illustrates the unique parallels between the two texts. While it is obviously not an exact copy by the chronicler of the CVR, this kind of side-by-side, word-for-word matching is rare in prosified epics that have been included in chronicles. The type of analysis this comparison affords is immensely valuable for understanding how the source material was treated and what role the chronicler played. In many passages of the CVR, the portions of text taken from the epic source simply reword the poetry in ways that show that the chronicler

is aware of the source material and yet it preserves the same order of key elements in the story line. In example 3 that follows, the three characters (all proper nouns): the Infantes, the Cid and the Cid's swords flow in direct unison with each other. In the prosified version, the epithet, "al que en ora buena naçió," is simply replaced with "çid" but they are still in the same order. The only other alteration between the texts besides the omission of certain words from the CMC is the switch to the past tense of the verb "besar" → "besaron" replacing the historical present or periphrastic future "ban besar".

3. Luego se levantaron los ifantes de Carrión,
Los jnfantes de carrion

ban besar las manos al que en ora buena naçió,
besaron estonçes las manos al çid

camearon las espadas ant'el rey don Alfonso (CMC 2091-93)
& *camjaron conel las espadas* (CVR 155r)

While comparing the two accounts of the Cid storyline, one notices more parallel structures like the phrases above and more inverted or criss-crossed passages. Powell became aware of the same passages with inverted word order but dismissed them as arbitrary inversions incumbent upon those involved in the process of prosification. His recorded reaction was that they were merely rewriting the poetry as prose. To him, it seems only natural to take apart the poetic text and then render it in prose in a fashion that seemed to invert the original word order.⁹ At first blush, the "inversions" described by Powell appear random and inconsistent in their occurrences. In some passages the intertextual inversions are even clustered together. Further study and careful examination reveal that the inversions, however, are not random; rather, the placement of chiasmic prosification was a deliberate effort perhaps to call attention to and focus on the source text. Whether scribes were more careful about where they inverted certain passages or whether they were directed by those in charge of the prosification to reword those sections (i.e., cronistas), the fact still remains that there is no randomness at all in where these inversions occur.

Powell argues that the "inversions" were not in the CVR, but in the poem, his "natural" word order being the prose of the chronicle.

Brownlee comments on the prosification process, "Prose, quite simply, more closely approximates the verbal structures of spontaneous oral discourse. Hence it is more faithful (and thus readily believable) than the artificial (less truthful) form of poetry" (400). Powell, similarly, considers the poetic text inverted or abnormal. He assumes that the poet responsible for composing accurate verse length and meter, as well as assonantal rhyme, inverted what would be the "natural" Castilian word order of the time. The chronicle has the language right, but if we agree upon an accepted date of composition for the CMC (that is, 1207), the poem predates the chronicle and therefore puts the prosifiers/chroniclers in the position of correcting language at least decades if not a century before their own and attempting to represent it accurately in prose for the readers of their historical text. Neither the poet/ *juglar* nor the chronicler had the intention of accurately representing the spoken language in Spain at the time; nevertheless, in the absence of a codified Castilian grammar, one cannot deny the fact that spoken Spanish had to be largely influential in the way word order was represented in prose.

As mentioned above, several passages in the CVR directly parallel the CMC and others keep the word order essentially the same, but then the CVR rearranges the text. Examples of this rewording are provided by the following examples:

4. un moro latinado (CMC 2667)
un moro que era latinado (CVR 158r)
5. En un monte espesso (CMC 2769)
enel monte que era mucho espeso (CVR 158r)

It is remarkable to see in texts that have come through the ages by such diverse paths, that the words can align so precisely. Paul Zumthor (1990) expands our understanding of the nature of the oral tradition from which epics stem, thereby placing this snapshot in its proper context. Similar parallels between other epics and their prosified versions in chronicle are extremely rare. Following the principle asserted by Welch, we need to pay particular attention to the times when we encounter congruity and consistency in medieval texts and examine them closely. Dyer (1995) gives considerable attention to the parallelism of the various manuscripts of the CVR to the CMC, focusing in on places where the two texts veritably converge verse for

verse. Without this close attention to detail, the subtle effects of prosification would be lost.

The congruencies we find in the CMC center around single phrases. Many passages of prosification transfer noun for noun and verb for verb in the same order; some cases even involve certain clitics. The following examples demonstrate just where this inversion illustrates striking similarities between the texts:

6. e entrando a Burgos oviéronla siniestra (CMC 12)
& a entrante de Burgos ovo la siniestra (CVR114r)
7. çiento cavalleros devemos vençer aquellas mesnadas.
(CMC 995)
que çient cavalleros de nos que vençeran a todos ellos
(CVR 121r)
8. pensemos de ir nuestra vía, esto sea de vagar. (CMC 380)
& *fuesse su via & anduvo toda esa noche.* (CVR 114v)

The following example shows a portion of the text where the first line parallels the poetic text yet in the second half the verb and complement are inverted with the prepositional phrase:

9. o me dexaredes de lo vuestro o de lo mio levaredes algo.
(CMC 1072-73)
o me dexaredes de lo vuestro o levaredes algo de lo mjo
(CVR 122r)

In addition to the syntactical similarities, the lexical similarities deserve attention because both texts are consistent in their use of vocabulary. Despite whatever other changes may exist between the texts, the CMC tends to use the same terms to point to corresponding referents as in the CVR. In cases where the CVR uses a different word, it repeats the word chosen for the prosification and remains consistent in its departure. For example, in the *infantes'* original show of cowardice in the CMC for the verb used to describe the point at which the lion escaped or was untied, the text reads "desató" (2282). In this same scene in the CVR, the text uses, "solt[ó]"(156v). Then again, in the recounting of the incident in the courts, the CMC uses "desató" (3331) and the CVR uses "solt[ó]" (106v).

Despite all of these examples of parallelism and consistency, the special examples of chiasmic prosification are of primary concern. These are the passages where the words and concepts of the CVR line up with the epic poem, but they are not in the same order. There is a careful, systematic and predictable inversion.

The primary questions regarding these inversions include:

- a. Exactly what is happening (that is, what words are being inverted?)
- b. Why is it happening?
- c. How many times does this happen in this manuscript of the CVR?
- d. Is this a common scribal "correction" or "prosification"?
- e. What light does this shed on scribal practices in terms of what they change?
- f. What did the scribes know that we don't? (i.e. Did they have access to a text that does not exist now?)¹⁰
- g. Does it reveal anything about where they had their script? Was this coming from an oral or textual source?

These questions will be addressed in light of what is known about chiasmus and the relationship between the CMC and the CVR. The term "chiasmus" best describes this phenomenon in the CVR where parts of the epic text are prosified and inverted because it is done in a textbook AB:B'A' pattern. All the elements of repetition, symmetry and centrality are present. If this is simply an inversion of word order, one would think that it would not be done with such meticulous attention to the source. Numerous examples abound, like the following lines that represent an almost perfect chiasmus:

10. CMC (2763) Alabándo s' ivan los ifantes de Carrión
prosification → CVR (158r) los jnfantes ca Yvan sse alabando

One additional example of the format used for illustrating chiasmic structures will be helpful here:

10a. A	Alabándo
B	s'
C	ivan
D	los ifantes de Carrión (CMC 2763)
D'	<i>los jnfantes ca</i>
C'	<i>Yvan</i>
B'	<i>sse</i>
A'	<i>alabando</i> (CVR 158r)

The chiasmus at work between the texts does not always restrict itself to specific words or word order; in many cases, the concepts being discussed are inverted. For example, before the Cid's *destierro* in the first Cantar of the CMC, the Cid talks to the Abbot first and makes arrangements for the safekeeping of his family and *then* he meets his wife and daughters (ll. 248-65). In the CVR, the Cid meets his wife and daughters first, they kiss his hands, and *then* he makes the arrangements with the Abbot (114v).

With regard to "natural" Castilian word order in the fourteenth century, one would expect to find the same word order associated with "natural" word order in the twenty-first century. The word order most often discussed in relation to the prose used in the CVR is Subject-Verb-Object (SVO). Examination of the actual text shows that sometimes the word order is SVO in the prose and sometimes it's SOV. Examination of the Per Abbat manuscript of the CMC shows that both word orders are manifest in the poetry as well. Sometimes it is the case that the order avoided in one place of the poem appears in another place in the CVR. For example:

11. Quando llego (CMC 2845/ CVR 158v)

12. Quando lo oyo (CMC 2815/ CVR 158v)

Examples that contradict this argument are found in line 3393 of the poem where SVO word order shows, "afé dos cavalleros entraron por la cort" and the "quote" in the CVR reads "Ellos enesto fablando entraron por el palacio dos cavalleros" (CVR 161r) or VOS. Other examples include:

13. en la ondra que él ha nós seremos abiltados (CMC 1862)
E pues que ael tanto bien viene nos avjltados somos
 (CVR 154v)

14. Quando él lo oyó, pesól' de coraçón (CMC 2815)
El quando lo oyo pesole mucho de coraçon (CVR 158v)

The reason for pointing this out is that sometimes the inversion does not focus on syntax, nor grammatical inversions, but simply on names of men or names of places or even general nouns as in the following example:

15. “miran Valençia, cómmo jaze la *çibdad*, e del otra parte a ojo han el *mar*, miran la *huerta*, espessa es e grand” (CMC 1613-15)

“& alas fijas toda la *cibdad* & la *huerta* & la *mar*” (CVR 153v)

The chronicle parallels the poem at this point, leaving no room for misunderstanding that the two texts are in conjunction, but the detail of the exact reference to the sea (*mar*) and the orchard/garden (*huerta*) is absent in the CVR as well as the inversion of the order in which they are mentioned.

Now, if it is that simple to prosify a text, why is the chiasmic prosification not done in every instance where there is an “unnatural” word order? The answer could be that sometimes, with chiasmic prosification, the inversion of word order to reflect “natural” prose had very little to do with why things were being changed. Rather, there seems to be an uncanny obsession with inverting anything from the poem. Even with lines as trite as *el Cid dixo* or *dixo el Cid* (CMC 3473), the inversion is present, but the motive is not. Numerous other instances appear where the CMC and the CVR both read *el Cid dixo* and *dixo el Cid* or the equivalent while giving no logical reason for the chiasmus.

With regard to consistency in the way the CVR treats the epic material, it is predictable as long as there is an example of chiasmus and how it will play out, but the predictability of the instances where chiasmus will show up is capricious. For example, near the beginning of the poem as the Cid leaves Bivar, the crow is described as flying on the right and then as they enter Burgos it is on the left. As can be seen

by the following examples, the poem provides a beautiful parallelism that is not lost in the prosification:

16. a la exida de Bivar ovieron la corneja diestra e entrando a
Burgos oviéronla siniestra (CMC 11-12)

*Otro dia sallio el çid de bivar . . . & dizen que cato por agüero
& que tomo corneja diestra & a entrante de burgos ovo la
Siniestra.* (CVR 114r)

We appreciate the preservation of this structure all the more when compared with this same left/right play further into the poem as the *infantes* and the Cid's daughters enter into the Robledo de Corpes. Here, the CMC and the CVR are both internally parallel, but there is an inversion between the texts as the poem is prosified (even though Atiença is still on the left and San Esteban is on the right):

17. a ssiniestro dexan Atiença...a diestro dexan a Sant Estevan.
(CMC 2691&96)
*dexaron a atiença a su ssinjestro & a sand estevan a su
diestro* (CVR 158r)

This is just one more example of a word order change that does not necessarily correct the unnatural word order of poetic language.

Formulaic Issues

Part of the purging of epic language in the prosification included the elimination of formulaic language; nevertheless, dozens of formulas survived the process. At times some formulas were actually created and became stock chronicle phrases (for example, "Otro dia llego..."). The CVR seems to absorb some formulas without incident as in the phrases "ivan a posar" or "iban a albergar." Sometimes formulas in the prosification are used repeatedly, for example:

18. Los infantes de carrion quando vieron (CVR 154v)
19. El çid quando esto oyo (CVR 160r)
20. pesole mucho de coraçon (CVR 2825)¹¹

Epithets, as such, did not seem to survive the prosification and in most cases were replaced by the proper noun of the person being referred to (Powell 82). With regard to chiasmus, formulaic structures were untouched. Formulas were treated as a single lexical item. (For example, there was no inversion from “otro día llegó” to “llegó otro día”). If there were inversions involving formulas, the formula itself was switched with the accompanying verb or noun phrase as in the following examples:

21. Violo mio Cid Ruy Díaz el castellano (CMC 748)
El çid quando lo vio fuele a correr (CVR 117v)

Where/ How Many?

The number of inversions catalogued in this study exceeds 200. For the most part, the text where an inversion takes place between the poetry and the prose is limited to one line of poetry from the CMC; it rarely extends beyond the same line and in even fewer cases does it skip lines. In those few exceptions, the inversions are not so much lexical or grammatical as conceptual and thematic as in:

22. -¿Ó eres, *Muño Gustioz*, mio vassallo de pro?,
en buen ora te crié a ti en la mi cort.
Lieves el mandado a Castiella al rey Alfonso,
por mí bésale la mano d'alma e de corazón,
cuemo yo só su vassallo e él es mio señor,
d'esta desonrra que me an fecha los *ifantes de Carrión*”
(CMC 2901-06)

“dela desonrra que le fizieran los *Infantes de carrion*.
E enbio ael a *muño gustios*” (CVR 159r)

When exploring to find exactly how much of this type of chiasmic inversion exists—on a large scale—it appears there may be no other examples. The argument could be made that extended chiasmic inversions do not exist because, where we can actually see a parallel relationship between an epic poem and a chronicle, there are only minor word order changes and simple syntax inversions and not a rearrangement of the composition of the story. This seemingly minor

detail suggests the degree to which the work of the medieval scribe was to copy the text bit by bit rather than writing it from memory or paraphrasing lengthy passages.¹²

Cluster Theory

While all these instances provide significant insight into the phenomenon of intertextual inversion, the fact that it does not occur at all possible points of contact is worth analyzing. Looking deeper into the patterns that are created, there seems to be a clustering of chiasmic prosification. For example, in some chapters of the CVR, where there is a statistically significant amount of common text from the epic source, there are few examples of said intertextual inversion.¹³ Then again, in other chapters, the inversions tumble over each other in every single line.¹⁴ In an effort to see how this relates to all aspects of the epic source we are familiar with, I separated the occurrences per 100 lines of the CMC. While revealing the same sort of variation from section to section, there were no overarching themes. In looking at the poem in terms of inversions per Cantar, concrete evidence demonstrates that the amount of material that suffered inversion doubles in the final third of the poem included in the CVR.

The final method of analysis that I used to discern the larger pattern of chiasmic prosification (and therefore to find the clustering) focused on the episodes from the CMC that were included in the CVR. The CVR distinguishes itself by being the only chronicle up to this point that makes mention of certain personal accounts of the Cid's life. Episodes such as the taming of the lion before the Infantes, the marriage of the Infantes to the Cid's daughters, the Afrontment in the Robledo de Corpes and the Court scene where the Cid demands restitution of the Infantes are all unique to the CVR. These scenes are also unique to the only manuscript of the CMC in existence today. For many years the contradictions between the many romances about the Cid as well as the *Historia Roderici*, the *Carmen Campidoctoris*, the *Mocedades de Rodrigo*, and other documents when compared with the CMC have called into question whether or not these events actually took place. The fact that both the CMC and MS. N of the CVR include these events increases the likelihood that they either had a common source or the Per Abbat manuscript is the source for the information included in MS. N of the CVR. All of this has to mesh with the theory that the Per Abbat manuscript of the CMC was not the only

copy/version in existence and definitely not the only copy/ version available to those in the Alphonsine school of translation.

Looking at the poem and its prosification in this light reveals clusters around the above mentioned events. The episode of the taming of the lion, mostly presented in chapter 75 of the CVR, contains thirteen examples of intertextual inversion. (By comparison, the preceding chapter contains none and the chapter following contains only eight.) Within only 25 lines of chapter 75, there is a cluster of ten instances of chiasitic prosification. Other significant peaks mentioned above are found in the latter part of chapter 77 where the poem recounts the Infantes' half-baked plot to kill Abengalbón (five instances in 70 lines of prosified text) and then again in chapter 78 in the Robledo de Corpes where there are ten instances in 100 lines. Another cluster centers around Muño Gustioz's visit to King Alfonso in chapter 79 (eight instances in 90 lines) and then in chapter 80 (eight instances in 100 lines) wherein the account appears of the Cid's arrival at the court in Toledo. Chapter 81 is the most concentrated section of chiasitic prosification in the text with 26 instances in fewer than 200 lines. It is in this chapter where the Cid faces the king and demands retribution for damages done to his daughters.

These findings show a conscious choice as to what the scribes or chroniclers could focus on and what they could leave alone. This concentration on key points in the plot of the third Cantar of the epic shows that the inversion was not merely a byproduct of prosification, but a deliberate attempt to draw attention to certain details of the story. Even within these accounts there are pockets of chiasitic prosification. While bland phrases such as "dixo mio cid" are inverted in the transformation from poetry to prose, the fact that *within* these accounts the key phrases, such as lines 3714 from the CMC "mis fijas vengadas son" (*mjs fijas son oy assy vengadas* CVR 162r) or 2748 CMC "por muertas las dexaron" (*las dexaron por muertas* CVR 158r), are also inverted makes the pattern significant.

There are many benefits to studying the two documents to find out why certain pieces of information were left out, or what was left in, what was changed, and what was not. Both the neglect and the alteration can bring attention to a passage. In this case, the chiasitic prosification marked a deliberate "x" on the spot of intersection between the two texts and this spot is occupied by the scribes. More than mere scribes, the students of the school of Alphonsine prosification were full-fledged scholars, with knowledge of their craft.

The chiasmic prosification seems to be a clandestine inference injected into their work to call attention to the authority of its modification.

Conclusion(s)

These inversions seem to imply a deliberate pattern that go beyond *transmutio* or *transpositio*. There is a purpose in this disproportion of chiasmic prosification. Perhaps the inversions were simple mnemonic techniques on the scribes' part as they cast their eyes from one text to the next, inventing a sort of memory game to insure consistency and accuracy in copying. Perhaps there was no text at all, but the copyist was forced to recall from memory the oral epic poem and recite it to himself as his hand lagged behind in trying to write it all down in prose. The fact that the text probably was there finds support in passages such as line 3310, copied from the poem, where smaller details are preserved. In the poem, Pedro Vermudez comments that the Cid never calls him anything but "Pero Mudo".

23. siempre en las cortes Pero mudo me llamades
(CMC 3310)
nunca me llamades en las cortes ssy non pero mudo
(CVR 160v)

This important detail shows that for some reason, the chroniclers latched on to a concept that deserved not only inclusion, but prosification akin to indirect discourse.

The implications of prose patterning give support to the "intelligent scribe" theory. They raise the bar for the simple copyist who sat at his wooden table, laboring by candlelight to do more than just copy the manuscript. Even the following lines of prosified text would not have been so important if it weren't for the already established pattern of altering the vocabulary:

24. "Los de mio Çid a los de Búcar de las tiendas los sacan"
(CMC 2402)
"saco los moros del canpo & levolos fasta las tiendas"
(CVR 157r)

The inversion here changes the meaning of what happened. No longer are the Moors being taken *from* their tents, instead they are being taken

towards their tents. Line 2403 of the CMC follows up with the same phrase chiasmatically inverted and the CVR text inverts the same line back upon itself.

25. "sácanlos de las tiendas, cáenlos en alcaz" (CMC 2403)
"E tanto los cuyo que los saco de las tiendas" (CVR 157r)

Another approach may lead us to believe that this chiastic inversion is a sign of quotation and not just inclusion. In ancient texts, it was often believed that the chiasmus was woven into the fabric of the text as a means of calling attention to the center. The center of an intertextual inversion is the scribe. If, as Dagenais suggests, "the scribe is the hinge on which the rest of the system of medieval literature swings" in the sense that "[scribes] are viewed as inept defilers of the sacred authorial text," then it is all the more important to pay attention to patterns of scribal interruption (113).¹⁵ The very act of copying the words of another author points to a deliberate use of a certain text, thereby forgoing the need for citation in the chronicle. If those words are inverted according to an agreed upon code, the pattern would point to the proper epic source. Again, quoting Freedman, "Since the crossover effect is not required in any language, it is an optional and often deliberate practice which serves one or several different purposes" (7). Chiasmus begins in levels of symmetrical and parallel repetition in an established and numbered order. It helps the reader or hearer focus on the central element of the message and carries with it references to the poet creator of the chiasmus. It is not only present in the production, but it also lingers in the mind of those accustomed to processing chiastic messages. Some readers or hearers chiasmatically invert information as they process it through a type of chiastic filter for all input (Norman 4)¹⁶

The rhetorical figure of chiasmus, consisting of presenting members of a sequence in an inverse order, is replete throughout literature (e.g., "Cuando quiero llorar no lloro y a veces lloro sin querer". - Ruben Dario). It does not close the door on creativity; rather, as Ong suggests, "originality consists not in the introduction of new materials but in fitting the traditional materials effectively into each individual, unique situation and/or audience" (Ong 1982:60).

There is no doubt that chiasmus serves a mnemonic function as well.¹⁷ Juglares memorizing thousands upon thousands of lines of poetry employed techniques that enabled them to retain vast amounts of

information. The singers with whom Alfred Lord spoke in Yugoslavia were at times not even aware of how they were able to remember so much information. To them it was so much a part of the system in which they lived and worked that they were unconscious of the techniques they had absorbed. Art truly does seem to reflect life in this sort of reality where deliberate chiastic symmetry between texts of disparate genres appeals to hearer, reader, and scribe.

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Notes

¹ The version of the CMC used for this article was the 1993 Alberto Montaner edition. The CVR was taken from the *Admyte* CD-ROM which published the Escorial Y-i-12 manuscript.

² For clarification, there is to be no confusion between the individual who was compiling the epic source—the chronicler (*cronista*) and the scribe or copyist whose job it is to make a copy of a manuscript.

³ See also Smith (1983) wherein he explains the importance of the epic prosifications in terms of literary development and the reputation prose chronicles had vis à vis the circulation of epic songs in the oral tradition.

⁴ Inaugural Address by John F. Kennedy, January 20, 1961.

⁵ See Martin 2004.

⁶ Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer, Rima XXXVIII

⁷ See Pattison, 119-20.

⁸ Other formats for showing chiasmus out of context have used the following visualization:

de las tiendas los sacan
sacan los de las tiendas

⁹ Powell comments on the inverted word order, saying, “First it must be noted that there are inversions of word order present in the chronicle and in the poem which were normal and acceptable in prose composition at this early stage of its development, but which are not normal in modern Castilian.” His main concern seems to be the inverted word order of the poem and not the patterning of “correction” in the chronicle (74-6). See also note 12 to Chapter 4 and *Reliquias* by Menéndez Pidal (1951), LII-LIII & LXVI-LXVII.

¹⁰ Powell says of the *Historia Roderici*, “It does seem that there were more stories than those reflected in the CMC, but that much of the

background structure of relationships surrounding the poem was already being created." (15). Dyer concurs on this point that the text used by the prosifiers of the poem is most likely not the same version that exists in common circulation today. If this is the case, then we need to come to terms with the striking resemblance between the two texts and account for their convergence.

¹¹ Formulas identified by deChasca (1968).

¹² See González-Casanovas (1990): "By quoting and imitating epic poets, the chronicler has gone from a synopsis to the deed itself" (174).

¹³ Chapters 9, 14, 15, 16, 61, 62, 67, 68, 69, 70 and 71 of the CVR all have fewer than three examples of intertextual inversion per chapter.

¹⁴ Chapters 13, 72, 75, 78, 81 and 82 of the CVR all have ten or more examples of intertextual inversion per chapter.

¹⁵ Dagenais writes further, "...we must refocus medieval literary scholarship on what scribes did and on the specific manuscripts they produced in doing it. We will also want to understand how what scribes did produced or destroyed meaning, how it engaged medieval readers. First, however, we must simply try to come to grips with how medieval textuality and 'scriptuality' functioned in itself, in its time, and to begin to explore the ways in which this understanding might change how we wish to talk about 'medieval literature.'" (114)

¹⁶ "I [am] concerned with chiasmus as a pattern of thought, an organising schema, a structure that determines, from behind the scenes.... To use the vocabulary of classical rhetoric, I [am] concerned with chiasmic reversals not as a feature of *elocutio*, the part of rhetoric that studies the choice and arrangement of words (where chiasmus normally belongs), but as a feature of *dipositio*, the arrangement of the parts of an argument, and above all *inventio*, the invention of subject matter and the logical arguments that give form to it." Wiseman.

¹⁷ "You know what you can recall" (Ong 33).

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